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COUNTRY Palestine

SUBJECT Arab Para-Military Groups

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ORIGIN

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INFO

DIST. 13 December 1946

PAGES 13

SUPPLEMENT

1. There are two apparently separate and distinct semi-military Arab organizations now functioning in Palestine.
  - A. Najjadah
    1. The credit for reviving the semi-military Arab movements in Palestine is attributed to the Najjadah and to its leader, Muhammad Nimr al-Hawari, a Jaffa lawyer.
    2. It appears that the entire membership of the Arab Higher Committee, as well as the head of the Arab Bureau in Jerusalem, Ahmad Shukayri, were present at the inaugural review of Najjadah held in Jaffa earlier this year. Jamal al-Husayni, in the capacity of Acting Chairman of the then AHC, and Ahmad Shukayri both addressed the participants of the review, giving the Najjadah their joint and wholehearted endorsement.
    3. It developed later that Jamal al-Husayni was, in effect, endeavoring to transform the Najjadah from an independent non-party organization into a strong and obedient arm of the Arab Higher Committee and later of the Arab Higher Executive, and, indirectly, of the Palestine Arab Party. Jamal's efforts to dominate and run the organization were resented by Nimr al-Hawari, who then continued to run his organization without the patronage of the AHE.
    4. Najjadah is organized along the lines of the Lebanese youth organizations, and appears to have borrowed its by-laws from the Lebanese parallel body. (Fundamental rules of the organization of the Najjadah are attached.)
    5. It has not been possible to determine Najjadah's strength, inasmuch as there are many conflicting estimates. Al-Hawari himself indicated that the membership in Najjadah was about 8,000 as of early August. General Staff Intelligence, Hq. Palestine, estimates the membership at present at some 6-7,000, while the police, who are usually dependable, estimate Najjadah's strength at 5-6,000. The Jewish Agency Arab Department, in minimizing the movement, indicated that their sources estimate its strength at some 3,000.
    6. The fact remains, however, that the organization enjoys substantial membership which is widely distributed over the entire country. The organization, as such, does not seem to possess arms, but certainly a substantial proportion of the membership does own its own arms, and, inasmuch as there is not great difficulty in purchasing weapons and ammunition in small quantities, it may well be assumed

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that the number of armed members is continually increasing.

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7. Najjadah's commander-in-chief, Muhammad Nimr al-Hawari, is assisted by a Council, consisting of five members. The organization is broken into troops which appear to be commanded by group leaders with jurisdiction over fixed geographical areas.

Comment: [REDACTED] disseminated on 12 September 1946, stated that Muhammad Nimr al-Hawari participated in a meeting of the central boycott committee and that members of the Najjadah were acting as supervisors and pickets in the streets to carry out the boycott program.

B. Futtuwah

1. This organization is much the older of the two, having been in the past a sort of youth club sponsored by the Palestine Arab Party. It has been inactive for years, and first indications of its reactivation date back to February 1946, when a meeting of the members of the Palestine Arab Party appears to have taken place for the purpose of establishing a Futtuwah Club with the following aims:
  - (a) Improvement of education through lectures;
  - (b) Unity of Arab youth;
  - (c) Establishment of a recreational and physical training center.
2. All through August and September 1946, definite signs of activity were observed. Rallies, meetings, and parades were taking place in various parts of the country. Formation of a group in Beit Safafa in August 1946 was definitely reported. Also in August a rally was reported at Hizariya village, with villagers from the Jerusalem vicinity (Husayni stronghold) participating. In September 1946, Futtuwah parades were held at Ramleh, Tour, Kalonia, and at Sur-Baher, Jerusalem; two thousand are said to have taken part in the latter.
3. Determined efforts appear to have been made to increase Futtuwah membership in Nablus. Nail al-Ghuri, Secretary of the Palestine Arab Party, is said to have visited Nablus with other members of the PAP to discuss a campaign for the increase of the Futtuwah membership--presumably at Najjadah's expense. According to police report, the headquarters for the campaign would be established in Nablus. According to a PAP source, about 1,200 Najjadah members joined Futtuwah in the latter part of September 1946.
4. Estimates of Futtuwah's strength are as varied as Najjadah's. One reliable estimate fixes the figure at 13,000, most of whom may be expected to possess some arms. According to British Military Intelligence, however, the total does not exceed some 6,000.
5. It is generally believed in well-informed government circles that Futtuwah's revival is accounted for by Najjadah's non-acquiescence in Jamal al-Husayni's desire to dominate the group.
6. Futtuwah is, at present, under command of its President, Khamil Areikat, a member of a prominent Arab family. The President is assisted by a Board, consisting of twelve members. Further breakdown appears not to be dissimilar to Najjadah's, insofar as the entire membership is broken into troops, based on, it is believed, geographical areas.

- II. 1. Efforts are continually being made to consolidate the two groups. Both groups acknowledge the Mufti's authority and leadership and, because of the Mufti's intervention, both have pledged themselves to support the Arab Higher Executive. However, neither group is willing to forfeit its own particular identity, and each proposes to maintain its own separate organization. A so-called "Youth Council" has been appointed, reportedly by the Mufti himself, consisting of the following members:

Rafiq Tamimi, Chairman  
 Emile al-Ghuri, Member  
 Nimr al-Mawari, Member

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Comment: The New York Times of 7 October 1946 stated from Jerusalem that Hajjadah and Futtuwah had merged under the Arab Higher Executive.

2. The function of this Council is to provide a unified command, pursuing policies along non-party lines. Although two of the members, al-Ghuri and Tamimi, are Palestine Arab Party men, it is believed that their devotion to the Mufti will always take precedence over their party affiliation, and that, consequently, the Youth Council may be considered relatively impartial insofar as party interests are concerned, but fully representative of the Mufti's views and wishes.
3. From a usually well-informed Arab source comes the information that Hajjadah and Futtuwah might be used in carrying out different assignments; as for example, one organization might undertake to combat Jewish illegal immigration through shore patrols, while the other one might devote its efforts to the enforcement of the boycott of Jewish businesses and goods. So far as is known, however, no such definite plans have been drawn up.

- III. 1. There is still a third group - the Moslem Brotherhood - which, in fact, is sponsored by the Moslem Brotherhood of Egypt (Ikhwan al-Muslimin). This group has only been established recently - probably some six months ago. It is believed to be financed by the Ikhwan al-Muslimin. It differs from both Hajjadah and Futtuwah in that it is a Moslem religious group organized as a club. Its membership in Palestine is estimated by the British General Staff Intelligence at about 20,000 and is reportedly growing. According to General Staff Intelligence, the Brotherhood is actively encouraging their own members to enlist in either the Hajjadah or Futtuwah, probably Hajjadah, as it is a non-party organization.

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Comment: [redacted] disseminated on 21 November 1946, stated that Sa'id Ramadan, an Egyptian member of the Ikhwan al-Muslimin, had visited Palestine in 1945 and successfully established branches of the Ikhwan in various localities. The report also stated that Ramadan was to leave Egypt on 17 October to inaugurate the opening of an Ikhwan branch in Haifa, to attend an Ikhwan Congress at Jaffa, and then to visit Syria and Lebanon in connection with the work of his organization.

#### Palestine Field Notes

- (a) In the last analysis, it is impossible to estimate the strength or the scope of influence of any of these groups with any degree of accuracy. It must be borne in mind that all these groups are in their formative stages, with ranks swollen by initial enthusiasm, and numbers of members are gradually becoming inactive. The fact of major significance is, however, that these organizations exist, and that, undoubtedly in case of troubles or an uprising, fusion might well be expected, possibly under the Mufti's leadership.

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- (b) The situation continues to be very fluid, with almost daily changes. The British authorities admit that they are watching the developments with "interest". The High Commissioner, Lt. General Sir Alan G. Cunningham, at a Press Conference a few weeks ago, in discussing these organizations inferred that the growth of these para-military organizations was causing the government considerable concern.

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Attachment: APPENDIX: Fundamental Rules of the Najjadah Organization  
(9 pages)

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APPENDIX

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FUNDAMENTAL RULES OF THE NAJJADAH ORGANIZATION1. Name of Organization Najjadah.2. Object of Organization

- (a) To unify Arab youth and endeavor to better youth conditions from a moral, educational, and sports angle;
- (b) To organize youth into scout groups to be known as "Najjadah" and to train them to be disciplined, obedient in the service of Palestine and other Arab countries;

Any Arab youth, irrespective of his nationality or religion, who is above 16 years of age and of good reputation, may be accepted in this organization;

- (c) To establish branches throughout Palestine connected with the organization at headquarters;
- (d) Not to take part in any party activities.

3. Membership

The members of this organization are divided into two groups; that is, active members and sympathizing members.

- (a) An active member is an Arab youth, irrespective of his nationality or religion, over 16 years of age and of good reputation;
- (b) A sympathizing member is any Arab having an inclination toward the realization of the program of the organization and encouragement thereof.

4. Affiliation to the Organization

The affiliation of any person to this organization depends on his acceptance by the Supreme Council.

5. Subscriptions

An affiliation fee of LP. 1 will be paid by every member accepted, and thereafter an annual subscription of LP.0.500 mils.

6. Administration of the Organization

The final authority in this organization rests with its Supreme Council and Executive Committee. The permanent office of the Executive Committee is in Jaffa. The Supreme Council is the legislative authority, but it cannot effect any alteration of these fundamental rules, save at a general meeting and with the approval of at least two-thirds of the Council members.

7. Supreme Council

This will be composed of the Executive Committee and two members from each District Committee.

8. Executive Committee

This will be formed of three members of the District Committee at headquarters, together with the Chairman of each District Committee.

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9. Supreme Council of the Organization

The Supreme Council will select a president, to be known as General Commander of the Najjadah, a general secretary, a deputy president and a deputy general secretary, from the members of the District Committee at headquarters.

10. Any member of a District Committee who has been elected to the Supreme Executive Committee shall relinquish his District Committee obligations and be replaced by another member of the District, so that he may not enjoy the membership of two committees at one time.
11. The General Commander, General Secretary and General Treasurer of the organization will occupy their positions on the Executive Committee for a period of two years.
12. District Committees

Palestine, in accordance with government administration, is divided into six districts as shown hereunder:

Galilee....head office at Nazareth  
 Haifa.....head office at Haifa  
 Samaria....head office at Nablus  
 Lydda.....head office at Jaffa  
 Jerusalem..head office at Jerusalem  
 Southern...head office at Gaza

13. In each of the above districts a district committee will be established to be known as the Najjadah District Committee - the name of the District to be added thereto.
14. The District Committee will be composed of five members to be selected by the active members of that district at their annual general meeting.
15. The elected members of the District Committee will select from among themselves a president, secretary and treasurer.
16. Special Committees  
 Whenever circumstances require, such committees will be formed for purposes to be specified by the Executive Committee, the Supreme Council of the organization or a District Committee. Such a committee shall be responsible to the body which convened it.
17. The Executive Committee and District Committee are bound by any resolutions formulated by the Supreme Council of the organization. Any resolution adopted in contravention of this rule will be considered void, regardless of whether it has originated from the Executive or the District Committee.
18. The Executive Committee is bound by the resolutions of the Supreme Council and has no right to voice its opinion independently.
19. The General Commander has the power to authorize the spending of LP.25, or under, in a case of extreme emergency; otherwise, authority shall be obtained from the Executive Committee.
20. The Supreme Council of the organization is empowered to represent the organization, and the General Commander or any member acting on his behalf will be authorized by the Supreme Council to represent it.

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21. A District Committee is the highest authority of the organization within a district and has powers as explained in these fundamental rules.
22. Command of the Najjadah  
The General Commander of the Najjadah will be selected in accordance with the provisions of Rule 9 and will be the Supreme Chief of the organization.
23. The General Commander will form the Supreme Council, composed of himself and the Commander of each District Committee and their assistants, and this Council will be the highest administrative authority in the organization.
24. The District Committee will appoint a member having outstanding educational qualifications, possessing a strong personality and a good reputation, as its commander.
25. The Commander of the District Committee will be responsible to that District Committee for the organization and discipline of local members and the execution of the organization's rules.
26. In accordance with the internal rules of the Najjadah, the Commander of a District will be the supreme authority in his district.
27. The Commander of a District will be appointed by the District Committee, after consultation with the leaders of the Najjadah groups in that district.
28. The District Commander and the group leaders in the district will form the District Command Council.
29. The District Command Council has the power to inspect and inquire into the affairs of the groups, individuals and the whole organization within the district; it can promote, reduce, or recommend the expulsion of any member in the district.
30. The District Command Council will be responsible for the administration of its branch to the Supreme Council of Command.
31. The Supreme Council of Command will be responsible to the Supreme Council of the organization.
32. Meetings  
The Supreme Council will convene at least one meeting each year, on the date and at a place specified on the invitation cards to be issued by the Executive Committee, which should also include the subjects on the agenda and be distributed 15 days prior to the date of the meeting. Subjects not referred to on the invitation card, but placed before the Executive Committee at least 5 days prior to the date of the meeting, may be discussed at such a meeting.
33. An annual general meeting of all active members shall be convened in districts at the invitation of District Committees.
34. The annual general meeting of districts shall be held during April, and in accordance with the methods adopted by the Supreme Council as regards invitation and the subjects to be discussed.

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APPENDIX35. Extraordinary Meetings

An extraordinary meeting in a district will be convened:

- (a) When such a meeting is considered essential by the District Committee;
  - (b) When an invitation is directed by the Executive Committee for such a meeting;
  - (c) When the Supreme Council of Command requires the convening of such a meeting;
  - (d) When the majority of members in a district require such a meeting to be convened.
36. The District Committee may, when this is considered essential, call the Executive Committee to an extraordinary meeting.
37. The Executive Committee may call the Supreme Council of the organization or the Supreme Command Council to an extraordinary meeting.
38. The Supreme Command Council will convene at least two meetings every year, at a place and date to be specified by the General Commander.
39. The Supreme Command Council may convene an extraordinary meeting at the instigation of the General Commander, or when application for such a meeting is submitted by at least two District Commanders.
40. When applications are submitted to the General Commander for the convening of an extraordinary meeting, by at least two District Commanders, the General Commander should, within one week, call for the meeting applied for.

41. Correspondence

Correspondence between all the branches of this organization should be accomplished in accordance with the provisions of these rules. Any contravention will entail the forfeit of the correspondence.

42. Each member of the Najjadah may submit any complaint or suggestion to the Supreme Command Council or Supreme Council of the organization, through his District Committee. Direct correspondence is prohibited.
43. All correspondence in connection with the command will be submitted to the Supreme Command through the District Command Council.
44. When correspondence is sent to the Supreme Command through the District Command Council, the latter should comment thereon.
45. Other correspondence relating to the affairs of general command will be sent to the Supreme Council of the organization through the District Committee.
46. District Committees should endorse correspondence sent through them to the Supreme Council.
47. All correspondence incorrectly addressed will be forwarded to the appropriate authority and then considered as correctly submitted.

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APPENDIX48. Elections

The Supreme Council, Executive Committee, and District Committees will be elected at the annual general meeting by means of a ballot. Those gaining a majority vote shall be elected to the respective body.

49. The elections will be supervised by a committee to be appointed by the General Commander and, in districts, by the president of the District Committee. The duties of this committee will be:

- (a) Supervising the elections;
- (b) Ascertaining that the electors are actually members and are subscribers who have paid their subscriptions regularly;
- (c) Declaration of the result of the elections;
- (d) Maintaining records of all candidates and the number of votes received by each;
- (e) Elections over, the committee will hand over its papers, duly signed, to the newly elected body.

50. When a vacancy exists in the last elected body, the latter will consult the Election Committee's records in order to appoint a substitute, in accordance with the votes received by the candidates.

51. Each member is entitled to record one vote at elections; no person may vote on behalf of absent members. In case of a tie, the president may exercise his prerogative, and vote.

52. Powers of Supreme Command Council

- (a) Responsible for the efficient control of all the regular troops of the Najjadah throughout the country, in accordance with the rules agreed upon by the Supreme Council;
- (b) Gives all technical orders and instructions;
- (c) Mobilizes and demobilizes troops as deemed advisable, and similarly appoints or discharges officers thereof;
- (d) Awards ranks, medals, and grades of leadership;
- (e) Arranges meetings, ceremonies, campings, sports competitions, general parades, picnics, and tours;
- (f) Responsible for troops' uniforms and ascertains the similarity of the kit and equipment of the whole organization;
- (g) In case of liquidation of any troop, of its own accord or by order of the Supreme Command, all its uniforms and other effects will become the property of the Supreme Command Council;

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- (h) Forms a committee in each district to try renegade members, in accordance with the rules of the organization, which shall be known as the Honorary District Court, for the trial of officers and commanders who contravene the organization's rules and instructions. The execution of a court verdict is subject to the sanction of the General Commander.

53. Powers of Supreme and District Councils

The Supreme Council will be responsible for the administrative affairs, funds, propaganda, publicity, formulating and modifying of rules and regulations, and for any other affair not within the powers of the Supreme Command Council.

54. The District Council will exercise the powers of the Supreme Council within the District, but will be bound by the resolutions of the Supreme Council, in accordance with the provisions of these rules.

55. Financial Affairs

The financial year of the organization will commence on 1 January and will expire on 31 December in each year.

56. All subscriptions and other money owed to any branch will be paid to the treasurer, who will issue a proper receipt duly signed by him.
57. The affiliation fee will be due as soon as an applicant is accepted as a member, but subscriptions will be due on 1 January in each year.
58. Members who fail to settle their subscriptions within a period of six months will be considered as having withdrawn their membership rights and consequently will be struck off the membership registers; these may be re-included in the membership registers if and when they pay the subscription due.
59. The treasurer will open a current account in a bank to be specified by the Supreme Council, and he will deposit therein the money he receives, in the name of the organization.
60. No one will have the power to spend any sum of money above the maximum specified by the Executive Committee.
61. Any check or financial document issued by the organization or its Executive Committee should be jointly signed by the General Commander and the treasurer, or any person acting on their behalf.
62. The person who signs a check or document will be held responsible to the organization for spending any sum without the authority of the Executive Committee or Supreme Council.
63. All the money received by District Treasurers should be sent by them to the Treasurer-General, who will deposit same in the organization's account at the bank.

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64. A District Treasurer should not keep any sum of money over LP.100; any surplus should invariably be sent to the Treasurer-General.
65. District Treasurers should deposit currency accumulating in their safes in a bank within their district, to be specified by the Supreme Council, and such money deposited in the name of the District organization should not in any case exceed LP.100.
66. Checks and financial documents in districts should be signed jointly by the District Treasurer and District Commander.
67. A District Commander may, without approval of the District Council, spend a sum of money not exceeding LP.10 at any time, but he has no power to spend any other sum before the Council has approved of the first expenditure.
68. The Supreme Council may impose a general tax or fee on every Najjad for a purpose considered to be within the interest and fundamental objects of the organization.
69. The Supreme Command Council has no right to interfere in any affair relating to subscriptions or donations paid to the organization.
70. Such financial affairs should be referred to the Supreme Council of the organization for settlement; the latter's decision in such matters is final.
71. The Supreme Command Council shall impose on the members the cost of uniforms, transport, and expenses of tours.
72. Accounts will be scrutinized by an auditor to be appointed by the Executive Committee at the end of each year, or whenever necessary.
73. The Treasurer-General shall produce an up to date balance sheet at the annual meeting of the Supreme Council, or at any other meeting of that Council, at the request, prior to the meeting, of the Executive Committee.
74. The Supreme Council will issue receipts - enumerated serially - bearing its seal. Such receipts will be maintained by Treasurers of the Supreme Council and of Districts.
75. Any treasurer appointed to the Supreme or District Council should produce a surety, the amount of which shall be specified by the Supreme Council.
76. Miscellaneous

The Supreme Council has the power to buy any property, provided that this property is registered as a Waqf in the name of the organization, or sell any of its belongings whenever such a sale is considered essential.

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77. The Supreme Council has the power to specify the salaries of any trainer, commander, instructor, teacher, adviser or any other employee whose employment is considered necessary by the Council.
78. A meeting shall not commence unless a quorum - i.e. more than one half of the members - is formed; otherwise the meeting shall be postponed and held within a fortnight therefrom. The second meeting shall be considered official, regardless of the number present.
79. Resolutions will be adopted in accordance with the majority of votes, and in the case of a tie the president may exercise his prerogative.
80. If the President is absent from any meeting, he shall be replaced by the Deputy President. In a case where the President and his Deputy are absent, the deliberating members shall appoint from among themselves a temporary president for the meeting, who will enjoy the same powers as the president.
81. Secretaries will maintain recorded minutes of every meeting. The minutes of a meeting shall be read over at the following meeting and shall be vetted before finally being sanctioned.
82. Any member of a District Council who fails to attend three successive meetings will be considered as having resigned and will be replaced by the next candidate who received the majority of votes in the elections.
83. All executive powers rest with the Executive Committee who will be subject to the rules and regulations of the organization and any of the resolutions of the Supreme Council.
84. A District Council will maintain a membership register, a register of the minutes of each meeting, and an accounts register, in addition to any books which its functions may require.
85. No member of the Supreme or District Council may act or execute independently, unless he is doing so in accordance with the powers vested in him by these rules, or on the authority of the Supreme or District Council, authorized within the latter's power.
86. Any member who contravenes the objects of the organization will be considered an offender, and the Supreme Council, after inquiring into the accusations levelled at him, may decide on his discharge.
87. All correspondence should be handled by secretaries of District and Supreme Councils only.
88. No District Secretary has the right to correspond with any person or institution without the knowledge and approval of the District Council.

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89. The Secretary General has no right to correspond with a person or institution not affiliated to the organization, without the approval of the Supreme Council or Executive Committee.
90. Correspondence will be considered as correctly despatched if it bears an address recorded in the organization's registers.
91. The Secretary General will be responsible to the Executive Committee and to the Supreme Council for the maintenance of all registers, books, records, and correspondence.
92. Affairs for which no provision has been made in these rules will be decided upon by the Supreme Council whose decision in accordance with these rules shall be final.

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